

INTRODUCTION

The incumbent serves as a technician for Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ). The incumbent is assigned a geographic area for which they have responsibility for helping PPQ Officers with the planning, coordinating and directing the survey, control, and regulatory functions for PPQ programs, including biocontrol and biotechnology activities.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Participates fully with the supervisor in planning, scheduling, and coordinating survey and control measures conducted within their assigned area by furnishing specific information about their work area that will allow successful program accomplishment. Similar participation is also done for biocontrol and biotechnology activities.

Inspects and surveys properties (farms, rangeland, nurseries, shipping points, etc.) for the presence of harmful plants, insects, and plant diseases. Inspections and surveys are made individually or by using lower graded employees under their direction. Incumbent determines the presence and extent of plant diseases, insects, or other plant pests. Reinspects formerly treated or inspected sites and surrounding areas to determine incidence or density of plant pests and effect of treatment operations.

Directs and/or conducts approved control and eradication measures including the adoption of cultural practices, sanitation measures, biological controls, and the application of herbicides, insecticides, nematocides, and fungicides in proper proportions or dosages.

Enforces Federal and/or State plant quarantines and regulatory orders which restrict movement of plants, plant products, and equipment into or out of regulated areas. Issues certificates permitting the movement of regulated articles. Reviews compliance agreements and takes steps to ensure conformance.

Maintains daily records of inspection work, control measures and regulatory procedures applied. Prepares reports on the activities and accomplishments within the assigned area. Some reports prepared through the use of Global Positioning System units and computer data input. Prepares maps used in connection with survey activities. Services and maintains records for vehicles.

FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED FOR POSITION

A practical knowledge of plant quarantine and regulatory procedures to enforce Federal and/or State agricultural quarantines is required. This includes knowledge of the principles of biological

science to analyze (determine biological significance) and take action (issue emergency action orders) to prevent the establishment and/or artificial spread of plant pests.

General knowledge of production agricultural activities and agricultural industry practices to allow appropriate application of quarantines and pest control/pest management procedures.

General knowledge of biocontrol to properly handle, safeguard and distribute parasitoids and parasitic organisms.

Practical knowledge to identify program pests in all their life stages and host organisms and associated crops.

Knowledge of governing rules and regulations to properly handle and apply restricted use chemicals.

Ability to interpret data such as trapping results, weather data, aerial spray effectiveness data (dye cards) etc.

FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

Incumbent works under the general supervision of a Plant Protection and Quarantine Officer who assigns and reviews work. The supervisor assigns the work to be carried out, describes the objectives of the work, and reviews new procedures or techniques to be followed. The incumbent has wide latitude for planning and scheduling the assigned work and for changing or modifying day to day work plans in the event of unanticipated emergencies or weather conditions. Work is reviewed by occasional spot checks of work by a supervisor, reinspection of treated areas, and work reports submitted by the incumbent. New or unusual problems are referred to supervisor for assistance.

FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES

Guides consist of domestic program manuals, regulatory guidelines manuals, biological control manuals, oral and written instructions, and program data.

Due to the number of guides the incumbent must use judgement to select and interpret the most appropriate guide.

FACTOR 4, COMPLEXITY

The incumbent performs a variety of mission-related duties such as surveying and sampling; trapping for a number of program pests; monitoring the aerial application of pesticides; scheduling and conducting regulatory inspections for a wide variety of locations and establishments; and coordinating the release of biocontrol agents.

The above listed duties must be coordinated with landowners, farmers, industry representatives, and state/county and federal officials. Incumbent must coordinate multiple program activities in their day to day activities. This may result in reprioritizing essential program activities.

The technician resolves minor problems independently and exercises judgement in planning and organizing tasks to be performed.

The technician may be required to coordinate and monitor the work of other lower graded employees, and may be assigned the task of training others, including cooperators, in accomplishing a variety of program-related tasks.

FACTOR 5, SCOPE AND EFFECT

The purpose of the work is to implement domestic programs within a wide geographic area in order to maintain the integrity of regulatory activities which are designed to prevent the establishment and/or artificial spread of the plant pests.

Successful accomplishment of duties will help prevent the establishment and spread of pests and diseases into new areas. The establishment of these pests and diseases would have a significant economic impact on regulated industries and American agriculture.

FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS

Contacts are with farmers, industry representatives, farm groups, growers, shippers, equipment operators, city, and county, and state officials, etc.

FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

The purpose of contacts is to explain programs, quarantine requirements, and to gain the cooperation of individuals and establishments concerned. Incumbent must enlist and gain the cooperation of these individuals which may require them to be persuasive and tactful to ensure compliance in order to attain program goals.

FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The incumbent performs the duties listed above which requires physical exertion to walk, bend, stoop, lift items of moderate weight, climb or hike on sometimes slippery and uneven surfaces while working in fields, pastures, processing plants, and other agricultural situations in order to enforce quarantines and pertinent regulations.

FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment primarily consists of outdoor activities with moderate exposure to uncomfortable and dangerous situations such as working in adverse weather conditions and around large agricultural related machinery. In certain situations the incumbent must take

precautionary measures to ensure his/her personal safety (such as wearing protective clothing and breathing apparatus). Considerable travel may be required in domestic program situations. Assignments may require extended work in remote/rural areas.

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